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## What steps do I follow to properly close my residential heating oil tank?

The following steps are required for either underground or aboveground storage tanks that have been out of service for more than 12 months or will not be used again:

- Empty the tank, and empty and cap pipes. Many homeowners have the heating oil company from which they purchased the oil also pump the tank.
- Have the tank professionally cleaned before removal. There are usually tank cleaning firms listed in the yellow pages of most telephone books under "tank cleaning" and "environmental and ecological services."
- Contact the local authorities to see if any permits are required for tank excavating.
- Remove the pipes and tank unless removing them would threaten the structural integrity of a nearby building. If the underground storage tank cannot be removed, it must be filled with an inert material (sand, gravel, or cement) before closing in place. Aboveground storage tanks can be left in place if the tank is safeguarded against trespassing and the filling portals locked to prevent trespassing.
- Heating oil tanks located in basements must have the fill pipe "blind flanged" (a solid disk inserted at a pipe joint) to prevent the heating oil from being mistakenly pumped into the basement if the tank was removed.
- A site assessment must be performed in accordance with Section 2.6.5 of Part 2 of the FL/CL Rules for underground heating oil tanks of 1,100 gallons or more. A site assessment is recommended for tanks less than 1,100 gallons.
- Dispose of the tank properly. Preferably, the tank should be taken to a salvage yard for recycling. Contact the local salvage yard for more information. If a salvage yard is not available, contact the local landfill for more information.

With both underground and aboveground storage tanks, if it appears a release of product occurred (dark stains in the soil, soils that smell oily or like gas, an oily sheen on water in the excavation), it is highly recommended that the homeowner or their designated representative report the release to the appropriate DEQ, Remediation and Redevelopment Division district office regardless of the quantity released to assure compliance with all applicable regulations. The Environmental Assistance Center, 800-662-9278, can identify the appropriate district office and phone number.

For more information on residential heating oil tanks and to view the Home Heating Oil Tanks brochure, visit [www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/deq-ead-tas-htgoilbroc.pdf](http://www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/deq-ead-tas-htgoilbroc.pdf).